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SUBJECT: SYG BAN AND U/SYG GUEHENNO DISCUSS SUDAN WITH SE  
WILLIAMSON

11. (SBU) Summary: Special Envoy Williamson met with  
Secretary-General Ban and U/SYG Guehenno at the United

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Nations on March 5. SE Williamson underscored President Bush's commitment to help to alleviate the suffering in Sudan, and emphasized the importance of more rapid UNAMID deployment. He also previewed the Friends of UNAMID Group and offered to lead support efforts in Sudan. SYG Ban said that Sudan remained a top priority and called for acceleration of the political process. Ban pledged UN cooperation and expressed the need for international, and especially U.S. support. U/SYG Guehenno raised concerns about the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and UNAMID deployment. End Summary.

12. (SBU) During March 5 meetings with SYG Ban and U/SYG Guehenno, SE Williamson conveyed POTUS frustration with the situation in Sudan. He commented that the "genocide in slow motion" is reprehensible and incomprehensible and repeated the importance of boots on the ground as soon as possible. SE Williamson also expressed concern over UNAMID's inability to absorb additional troops, including an additional influx of 3,600 peacekeepers by June 1. He told SYG Ban that the UN was well situated to play a major role in Sudan and that it was crucial for the USG and the UN to work together closely. SE Williamson reminded SYG Ban of the recent USG announcement of USD 100 million to train and equip African peacekeeping forces. He also commented that the NGO community is playing an "enormous role" in Sudan with 1,000 international and 14,000 local humanitarian workers. While in Sudan last week, SE Williamson heard from NGO representatives who said that UNAMID's presence and readiness to engage in targeted patrols have helped to decrease the level of violence in the country.

13. (SBU) SYG Ban said that Sudan remains one of his top priorities. He remarked that the UN and the USG share objectives and commitment to Sudan, noting his recent meetings with both President Bush and Secretary Rice. Ban said that it is essential to accelerate the pace of deploying the hybrid mission as well as stepping up the political process. According to Ban, there was a strategic decision at the top-levels of the Sudanese government to integrate Sudan as a member of the international community. He noted that if the Sudanese were able to "stick to their commitment," they would expect incentives from the United States including the lifting of sanctions, he said, which he raised with both President Bush and Secretary Rice.

¶4. (SBU) SYG Ban said there is an urgent need for helicopters and the transfer of heavy equipment in Sudan. He expressed frustration with his lack of success in persuading South Africa, Nigeria, Senegal, Brazil, India, China, or European countries to provide helicopters. We should be fully prepared to provide our own support, he said, commenting that "we could easily be blamed by both the international community and the Sudanese for lack of action." He suggested that the USG should "take this issue seriously" and talk to developed nations, who should be responsible for supplying helicopters and heavy equipment. We need international support, he said, but specifically USG support and leadership.

¶5. (SBU) Williamson recognized the need for U.S. leadership and added that the USG will coordinate with partner countries to help address problems in UNAMID deployment. He said that it is important for the United States and the UN to work creatively together. SE Williamson told Ban that the United States and Canada would launch on March 6 a "Friends of UNAMID" group of nine partner countries to help ensure the rapid deployment of UNAMID. The March 6 meeting, to be held at the U.S. Mission to the UN, will include senior representatives from capitals as well as Permanent Representatives. Following this meeting, Friends of UNAMID will meet at the working level on a weekly basis. These discussions will focus on benchmarks for UNAMID deployment. On helicopters, SE Williamson added that during his recent trip, the Egyptians offered to provide helicopter assistance. He remarked that UNAMID should address its inability to absorb additional troops. SE Williamson urged SYG Ban, and Ban agreed, to make a public statement welcoming the Group of Friends and noting the USD 100 million for the development of troops in Africa.

¶6. (SBU) In a separate meeting, U/SYG Guehenno said that he was very concerned about the JEM, commenting that this was a "particularly bad time" in Sudan. He also remarked that most battalions on the ground were under-equipped and demoralized. He noted that better-equipped battalions are gradually

USUN NEW Y 00000212 002 OF 002

replacing weaker battalions, and that the UN is making the best out of a bad hand. On the Egyptian deployment, Guehenno said that the Egyptians would "come strong" but were unwilling to break into battalions. SE Williamson agreed that the situation was difficult, adding that the real victims were the 75,000 displaced people. He told Guehenno that it was crucial to get boots on the ground and assured him that the USG and the UN would work together constructively to establish peace and stability in Sudan.

¶7. (SBU) This cable has been cleared by SE Williamson.  
KHALILZAD